

Eat Me Instead

The amount of rubbish that spills out of children's lunchboxes is mind blowing. Lots of children take those small chip packets, muesli bars, or seaweed packets to school. They are all surrounded by plastic, and we all know plastic isn't good for the environment. What can we do to solve this avalanche of plastic that always ends up at landfill?

We went around our school to see how much plastic packaging each year group had on that day. Here is the data we collected from about 50 people: 18 chip packets, 5 seaweed packets, 3 yoghurt pouches, 2 foil wrapping, 17 oat bars, 5 pieces of glad wrap. But we're not even finished! These were only students from Year 5/6.

When we collected the data from just about 30 Year 7/8 students, we realised that they even had more rubbish than the Year 5-6 students.

They had 17 chip packets, 3 yoghurt pouches, 14 pieces of gladwrap, 2 seaweed packets, 3 pieces of tissue and paper bags (not reusing), 1 foil wrapping, and 19 chocolate wrappers!



A lunchbox with too much packaging

Plastic can take centuries to decompose, and there are more than 1.5 million children in New Zealand. Now, imagine if they all ate 1 or 2 small packets of some snack food a day. The effects of using plastic packaging are not good at all. Plastic causes bad pollution and it kills marine wildlife. Plastic causes substances to be let go into the soil. When plastic bags disintegrate beneath sunlight and if plastic bags are reduced to ashes, they release a toxic substance into the air causing air pollution. Plastic pollution threatens wildlife, differentiates ecosystems, and causes risks to human health. Plastic is a major contributor to both land and water pollution. When it's not properly disposed of, it can end up in our oceans and rivers, harming marine life. The plastic falls out of the rubbish bin, floats through puddles, goes into the gutter and we all know that the gutter leads to the ocean. It can also end up in landfills, where it takes centuries to decompose.

Every year, 12.59 million kilograms of waste goes to landfill in New Zealand. This includes chip packets, seaweed packets, oat bar packets, yoghurt pouches, sliced cheese, and more. We really need to stop this.

Bibliography

[How many children in NZ](#)

[How much waste goes to landfill](#)

[How much kiwis spend on chip packets](#)

[How much packaging is consumed in NZ](#)

[How much plastic straws are used in a year in NZ](#)

[Overflowing Lunch Box Picture](#)